

# BLUE GRASS BLADE

WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

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## FRENCH

### REPUBLIC AND THE VATICAN

Historical Sketch tracing the Passage of France from a Priest Ridden Nation to a Land of Liberty in Fact as well as Name.

#### LIBERTY THE ONLY DEITY THAT MAKEH BENDED KNEES

(By John Emerson Roberts.)

In 1502 a certain duke was returning to Paris. The day was Sunday. He stopped in a little country village and went to the chapel to attend mass. Early the chapel was a large warehouse in which six or seven hundred Protestants had assembled for worship. They were singing a hymn. The singing disturbed the worshipful duke at the altar. He went out, placed himself at the head of his armed retainers, fell upon the defenceless worshippers and slew two hundred of them, without regard to age or sex, and wounded many more. That was the year 1502. It was the beginning of the war of extermination, waged against the Huguenots, a war that raged, with inconceivable intermissions, for nearly forty years. When it had been in progress ten years and the year 1572 had been reached, the Queen Regent of France, tired of the slaughter, weary with the shedding of the blood of her inoffensive citizens, caused a peace to be declared. At the consummation of that peace was heard in Paris the clerical party was inflamed with indignation. They plotting began, deepened, and was carried forward until on the night of the 24th of August of that year a white mass was placed on the door of every one in Paris known to be a Huguenot or a Protestant. At two o'clock the chaste and inviolable sanctuaries of the Prince of Pease, the bells of those temples gave the signal and the massacre of St. Bartholomew began. Paris was crimson with blood. The passion and fanaticism of slaughter spread into the provinces, and the bloody hand of destruction did not stay until more than one hundred thousand people had become the victims of persecution and religious hatred. Until the year 1598, the date of the edict of Nantes, did the work of extermination end, which had begun with the massacre of Vassy in the year 1565.

But a thing was possible; but one thing, dramatic, retributive, poetic thing. Three-fifths of the land was possessed by the Crown, the nobles and the clergy. The people, the common people, the people without rights, the people without privileges, the people without rights, the people without privileges. Every thing was taxed. No one was free from extortion. No one held his property, nor even his life, secure. If a peasant youth married a peasant maiden, by their laws and the rights claimed by the feudal lords, was first the possession of the feudal lord. If a man were married in conformity with the rites and rules of the church, had paid all the fees, submitted to all of the formalities, even he could not marry until he had paid the lord until he had seen the bishop and paid an extra fee. This was what Voltaire called a tax upon the honeymoon. But one thing, if say, was possible. Let historians, let apologists say what they may, there was but one thing possible, one inevitable, one tragic retribution. When the States General had assembled in 1789, a farmer representative, a representative from the peasant, the common, the oppressed, the downtrodden of France, said, "If you had burned the title deeds of feudalism forever, the peasants would not now be burning parchment and castle together." "The feudal burdens crush and degrade humanity." "Let us," he exclaimed, "burn the privileges that yoke men like beasts of burden and compel them to beat ponds at night in order that the frogs may not disturb the slumbers of their voluptuous lords." One thing and only thing was possible, and that was what? That was the revolution of 1789. No thoughtful man would think for a moment of apologizing for the excess, the madness, the wildness of those scenes that ensued, but over and against that stands and shines forever this fact, that the revolution was the legitimate, the inescapable, the inevitable result of the coalition between the crown, the nobles and the clergy for the oppression of the common people. It was that slumbering giant awakened at last; it was that despair breaking into the fury and frenzy of a storm. It was the rising wind crushing and down-trodden hearts of a remaining spark of life and hope, and the revolu-

tion, like an incarnate vengeance half diabolic and half divine, swept altar and throne into the abyss.

One thing happened to the church in France at that time. The national treasury was exhausted. The people were suffering. There was not only misery and privation; there was starvation on every hand; and the general assembly appropriated church property for the benefit of the government and the people. Right there in 1789 the title to the church property of France passed out of the hands of the church. The church was declared schismatic by Rome, and for eleven years, or until the first consulate, Rome made no contributions, offered no aid, to the French church in the erection of buildings, or the accumulation of property. The church buildings belonged to the person who owned the site upon which they stood, to the village, or the province, or the city or person, or the commune. The courts subsequently held those titles void, and they never have been vacated. It is necessary for us to remember that fact in the face of the events that are transpiring now. When, in 1801, Napoleon, the first consul, made an agreement with the Pope, the famous concordat referred to so often in current dispatches, he did not give back the property to the church.

The agreement provided that the church buildings, presbyteries, parsonages and episcopal residences should be the disposal of the bishops, and theirs in fee simple. Moreover, Napoleon undertook to nominate all the bishops, and they were to be canonically instituted, after approval by the Pope. But, while the event was transpiring and leading up to the revolution, there is another development, another movement—the movement of ideas, the development upon the intellectual side in the life of the French people. Before the revolution there came a great and glorious body of men whose sole purpose was to disseminate knowledge, to afford enlightenment. These men were called the encyclopedists. Let us look at their work. Let us name a few of the illustrious souls. That was the encyclopedist respecting the world and life, the ideas promulgated by the church? They were respecting man that was not merely natural, but by nature. That he was helpless. Even if he had power to choose good, he had no will to do so. It was under the wrath and condemnation of God. There was no escape for him except through the instrumentality or mediation of the church. No power of salvation lay from the sacraments. The church had taught that the world was all evil and man, in order to be wholly and entirely good must live apart from the world. They had preached asceticism. On the contrary, the fundamental hypothesis of the encyclopedists were these: That a man is by nature good, that this world is capable of being made a desirable dwelling place; that the evils of the world result from bad education and bad institutions. That the philosophy, the gospel, if you will, that the precepts of the church are good, but that the ancient dogmatic teachings of which France had been inculcated for hundreds of years. The encyclopedists did not attack religion; they did not attack the belief of God, but they did attack the belief in miracles, and they did attack the oppression of conscience, as supported by the priestly aristocracy. What they said and the way they said it seems, as we look upon it now, absolutely harmless, but that it meant revolution. For example, in their article on agriculture, all they say or attempt is to show the people the limitations, the hardships, the burdens under which agricultural pursuits were followed, the inadequacy of results or returns, and they attempted to point out the cause of those limitations and that inadequacy. In the article on game they set forth the fact that great droves of deer and wild birds are permitted to roam over certain portions of France, destroying the crops of the peasants, crops upon which sometimes the peasant depends for the life and sustenance of his wife and children, and they point out the fact that if the peasant is in defense of the lives of his wife and children, so rash as to shoot a deer or a wild boar, which are the property of the idle nobles and clerics, the peasant will be arrested and condemned to the galley. In the article upon labor they display a certain enthusiasm for the purposes, the interests and the details of the man who works. This would not seem strange now, but at a time and in an age when labor was a mark, not only of servitude, but of disgrace, when the only man called honorable was the man that could live in idleness upon the unrequited toil of a vassal or a slave—to exalt and dignify honor then meant revolution. The definition of journey-

man was this: One who performs labor with his hands and in paid wages. They go on to say that it is the duty of a good government to have primarily in mind the welfare of the journeyman, for, if he be miserable, the nation is miserable. And they say further, under the same head, that net profits equally distributed are better than greater profits distributed unequally, which simply divides society into two classes, one gorged with riches, the other suffering in misery. This was the idea, the scope, of the encyclopedists, and yet, now and then you will read in the current literature of these men of the 18th century, and read statements such as this: That they and their co-workers were subversive of the peace and tranquility of France, and were really the authors of the present agitation. And who are these men? Voltaire was one of them. The man who popularized the philosophy of Newton, and had the distinction of introducing the works of Shakespeare in France. And then there was D'Alembert, Rousseau, Buffon, Turgot, Montesquieu, Haller and Condorcet, and indeed every name that helped to make the literature of the 18th century famed and illustrious contributed more or less to the work of the encyclopedists. The central point of collision between two ideas. One of those ideas, was this, the absolute elimination of political power from the control and work of shaping opinion. In other words, the absolute secularization of the government. The other idea found its answer and its embodiment in the massacre of St. Bartholomew and in the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

What is the present situation in France, born of its details and accessories that are merely transient and local? The issue agitating France at the present moment may be stated like this: Shall the French government be secularized? Shall the state be the church, or shall the church be the state? Shall the church be divorced? Shall the influence and interference of the priesthood, in the affairs of government, be prohibited? Shall France be governed by Frenchmen or by Italians? Shall she be governed by her own citizens or by aliens? By her own people or by the Pope, the vicar of Christ? To these questions the French Republic is making answers that thrill the heart of every lover of liberty in all the world. Let us see what the government has done. In the first place, it has revised and proceeded to enforce the law of 1881 regulating public meetings. This law is not only impartial, governing all alike, but it is also necessary. It is impartial because there are over six hundred Protestant churches in France, nearly one hundred Jewish churches, all of which come under the provisions of this same law, and none of which have uttered a protest against it. It is necessary because it has been known that within the heart of a certain element of the Catholic church there were going forward plots and intrigues against the tranquility, the peace and the permanency of the present government. The French government has done this: It has suppressed the grandities and pensions formerly granted to priests and ecclesiastics. Under the agreement between Napoleon and the Pope in 1801, by virtue of certain concessions, the French government in the person of Napoleon, promised to pay the pensions and annuities of the priests, to maintain, to keep in repair the church buildings, and properties, and to erect new ones whenever they were needed. Under this provision the French government has been paying about ten millions of dollars a year for the support of the Catholic priesthood. Now, the French Republic says to the Catholic Church: "You must work or starve; you must support yourself or be unsupported." The principle is this, that the religious system, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Mohammedan, or called by any name, the religious system that has depended for its support and its perpetuation upon state aid, government support, has no justification whatever for its existence. If it shall develop that the Catholic Church perishes in France without the support of the government aid, then the action of the government in withdrawing that aid will have received its complete justification. And the government has in addition, taken over into its own control the material matter of education. Let us go back a little bit. The French republic was betrayed by Napoleon the Little in 1801. One of the first attacks made by that empire or kingdom or consulate, or whatever one is

## THE APPEAL TO FACTS

When Honestly Made is Fatal to Every Form of Theology and Christianity Must Also Suffer.

#### ATHEISM IS THE ONLY REFUGE FOR THINKERS.

The New Theology describes itself as "among other things, an appeal to facts." This description, however, is true only in part. No theology appeals to facts. It is undeniably true that beliefs, when firm and fervent, create facts, the facts of religious experience; but these are not facts to which any theology can appeal, because in no sense can they be regarded as theological facts. That the New Theologians do appeal to them only shows that the New Theology is a house built upon the sand and is doomed to fall. The facts of religious experience owe existence to certain beliefs with the truth or falsehood of which they have absolutely nothing, either directly or indirectly, to do. There are so many people who believe in a God of love and forgiveness who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ; and if the faith is strong and passionate they enjoy what they call the sweet sense of the Divine presence in their hearts. Does it never occur to such people that their joyous experience is wholly dependent on their faith? It is reasonable to suppose that, if God and the eternal Christ really existed, they would have dealings only with those who believed in them? It thus follows that there are no facts to which theology can appeal as proofs that its dogmas are true. This applies to all theologies alike.

It is true that the New Theology does appeal to facts, but they are only the facts which prove the Old Theology false. The New Theology, when with some of us, a writer says, "Is whether a proposition or doctrine is, in fact, a belief—say, the Virgin Birth, or the physical Resurrection of Jesus—is, de facto, true," and the facts appealed to in such cases, satisfy the generality of New Theologians that the doctrine is true. It is not de facto, true. But the New Theology is based on the Divine Immanence, a pure dogma in proof of which no acts can be advanced. To thousands of people the doctrine of the Divine Immanence is simply incredible because of the entire absence of all evidence.

We are told that "it is probably our ignorance that makes certain things seem incredible to us." But are unbeliefs, as a rule, more ignorant than beliefs? Are the facts of the Universe less known to Atheists than to Theists? The truth is that the majority of our Freethinkers have been driven to unbelief by the light of unbelief. Looking the facts of history in the face, they have realized that any doctrine of a personal God is to them utterly incredible. In the nature of the case, it is belief, not unbelief, that implies ignorance. But the believer exclaims: "Surely some inference is due to the consensus of experience." Possibly; but we must ask, experience of what? Has anybody ever had experience of God, of the Holy Spirit or of the next world? Has anybody ever had experience of the soul as distinct from the body? All these are objects the existence of which is assumed without evidence. To speak of the "consensus of experience" in connection with them is laughable. 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## BLUE GRASS BLADE

Founded 1884, and edited by Charles Clifton Moore up to his death, February 1, 1904.

JAMES E. HUGHES ..... Editor and Publisher

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Let go the brakes.

Turn not from duty's call.

Trouble followed human development.

Love and appreciation will rule all things.

God's character is made by his worshippers.

A handful of common sense is worth a bushel of learning.

If we had no faults ourselves we could not see faults in others.

He that has much and wants more is poor, but he who has little and wants no more is rich.

A cheerful heart is of greater value than all the prayers that ever been mumbled by the lips of men.

Many who are now digging for Greek roots and Latin verbs could tender valuable service by studying the excellent tuber.

Logical minds revolt at the jumble of self-evident theological absurdities and turn to the light of Science to find the cause of existence.

Congressman James of Kentucky, a mere guileless youth from the western part of the state, has appointed himself God's special representative to see that the Christian joss gets back on our coin.

When the Christian can understand that he will be punished by his sins and not because of them, he will realize the folly of prayer and praise to an incomprehensible fetish in the skies.

The greatest intellectual achievements of the world have yet produced come from the brains of poverty, not from the rich. It takes trouble and sorrow to develop character and strength. Flowers are won by toil.

Considering the fashion adopted by some orthodox churches to attach a dance hall and a modern stage as a part of the catechism, to say nothing of moving pictures shows, the deity will have to get a move on him or the devil will soon have the entire congregation grabbed, preacher and all.

Funny how religions will change. In the old days rewards for orthodox belief came immediately, later they were turned to "missions in the skies" while the priests absorbed the profits. Religious punishments used to be confined to a few boils and bad crops, but these have been turned into a literal hell of fire where the souls of unbelievers and unbaptized babes forever burn. Great is religion.

Some indignant correspondent, feminine, writes to assure us that we are doomed for hell. Cen-

sidering those who have gone before even that would be preferable to roosting on some roscate cloud in company with a halo and a harp, attended by a choice assortment of angels. Realizing that the great questions has not yet been answered, who knows, but what it might be the other fellow, who will get it in the neck, after all.

Any religion that is compelled to rely upon secular law for its recognition is inherently rotten. Any religion which must appeal to brute force to secure respect for its god is fiendish and brutal and unworthy the devotion of a yellow dog. Now take a glance at the history of the religion of Christ, ancient and modern, and estimate its character in the light of the foregoing suggestion.

Christ had no more to do with the making of the "Holy Sabbath" than Moses had to do with establishing the Fourth of July. Neither were sanctioned by the father, the son, or any of the original saints. Those who insist upon the enforcement and not according to the conscience of the individual.

### A SUBSTITUTE UNNECESSARY.

One of the principal stock arguments of orthodox when confronted by rationalism, or Free-thought, is to ask what to give in lieu of Christianity should its abolition, decay, or death be brought about.

What should the answer be?  
What must the answer be?

### Scientific Truth and Its Application to Human Life.

In the destruction of error nothing is required in its place. A lie is hurtful at all times and in all places. The injury may not be felt immediately, but the result is bound to be experienced sooner or later. The physician is not urged by the sick to give them another ailment in lieu of the one they have been able to conquer. It was the physician's task to destroy the original disease, the destruction of falsehood, like the destruction of disease, is desirable under any and all circumstances and the free mind is left to accept such truth that may come before it without the slightest regard or thought for the old error destroyed.

Accepting this proposition as being the correct view of the method of reaching a stage of intellectual liberty it follows that if Christianity is false it should be destroyed and a substitute substituted. The human mind does not desire a substitute of a substitute for falsehood. It does not pretend to offer any substitute. It is a Free-thinker to subscribe to a creed, if it were possible, would be to fetter the mind and the very principle of Free-thought would be violated. The "I think" is the underlying basis of Free-thought. The "I believe" is the prerequisite of all orthodox religions.

The suggestion that Free-thought declines to offer a substitute for Christianity on the ground of no necessity, does not mean that the Free-thinker is to have no object in life. The Free-thinker can and does accomplish more than the average church member, or the average believer in Christianity. This work may not be found in orthodox institutions, but in the doing of simple justice. With justice triumphant, charity becomes unnecessary. The Free-thinker is to have the very best he knows how to do, and if mischievous fates seem to conspire against him, he does not waste his time in foolish prayer, he does not fret or cry out against destiny, but buckles to with a will and strives to work for his own redemption. The Free-thinker knows that one thing he may do in that direction shall be in vain. He knows that no really great effort can fail. He makes the deed count instead of indulging in delusive dreams of some future state of happiness.

Once the bulk of humanity can grasp the full meaning of the impressive truths of the world, they will be made brighter and happier for us all. Under them no being would wish to do wrong toward a living thing. No being would wish to violate the laws of right living. Man may long for many pleasures that never come to him, but if he weaves the warp and shrinks from the loom, he cannot work in vain for in the end truth must prevail and in truth alone can real and permanent happiness be found.

Man's salvation does not depend upon crucified saviors nor upon the shedding of blood. It depends on work. The very liberty we enjoy today was not given freely, but it had to be wrested in a fierce death struggle from the reluctant hands of tyrants.

Tears of blood and toil secured the charter of our political freedom and as religious freedom is just as essential to human happiness as we must work for that with the same energy, but along less violent paths. Is there a Free-thinker in the land, rejoicing in his own freedom, denying a similar freedom to his neighbor, or is perfectly happy to witness the yoke of mental slavery still about his neighbor's neck? We think not. Then it is our duty to save others and to place the means of our own happiness within their reach. We must not shirk the task. It is a duty we owe to mankind. Let us perform that duty without fear. What we have duty done there will be none to fear. The old hag of superstition will be dead and gone and none to mourn her loss.

### ARE YOU A MATERIALIST?

The foregoing interrogatory has been propounded to the Blade's editor by the estimable lady, secretary of the Materialist's Association, and we are proud to state that the affirmative scoops the stakes.

There is little of the "spirit" about our personality, whether of the distilled variety for which Old Kentucky is famous, or those of which we are told is the kingdom of heaven. Forced by reason and argument, by fact and investigation, we have been impelled to the materialistic standpoint for there is no other logical position for any mind though but partially informed, to accept.

In another column will be found an article from Mrs. Bliven on the subject, and a communication in which the above question may be found. From what is here said we can have no possible objection to having our name enrolled as a member of the Association, and we heartily recommend the same course to our readers who have reached the same stage in progressive and intellectual thought.

The proposition, however, to establish a section of the Blade to be known as the Materialist Section, is another and different proposition. The Blade is open at all times to communications from any and every member of the Association and a section, just a few inches, would be of so little value that its establishment could not aid in the work to any appreciable extent. Our notion is not in opposition to the suggestion offered, simply a gentle reminder that a section is hardly necessary where the entire paper is devoted to the advocacy of the same principles and subjects.

It may be, however, that members of the Association would desire to group their writings under one head. If that is true, they have but to express the wish and it can be readily done. All articles intended for it should be so marked, or signed; so that the designation place may be accorded them. Such discussions as would thus be created would be certain to prove interesting and the Blade, as well as the Association, would benefit thereby. Mutual interests can be served. The discussions would bring about an interchange of ideas and all profit through reading them.

The Blade can but reiterate that as its pages are devoted to an open advocacy of materialism, and the philosophy underlying it, as the only true philosophy, we shall be pleased to publish any article written by members of the Association at any time.

### SUNDAY CLOSING IN COTNAM.

New York State has a statute upon its books which prohibits giving theatrical performances on Sunday, but it has been such a dead letter for years that the play houses have been in the habit of giving Sunday performances, and the people, not only accustomed to it, have actually grown to like it and appreciate it.

That the people do like it has brought on a world of trouble. The dear pastors of the prominent churches suddenly found their congregations thinning out and the theaters doing a land office business, and all at once the spirit of avarice, born of business rivalry, began to enter their minds until a united effort was made to shut the theaters up and enforce the old law to give the preacher a chance. The result is that the preachers and the religious weeklies published in and around New York, have joined in a hue and a cry against the stage, against the theaters and now insist that they must be closed in "accordance with the law."

Of course, every good citizen should "Obey the law." It is presumed that all good citizens do obey the law. To break the law is to break the secular law, the statute law of the land. With the preacher there is another law said to be higher and more to be feared for any infraction known as the "Law of God." The statute law is the law of man. The preacher insists that the law of God is higher and of greater authority than the law of man. If this is true, then every preacher in the land is a violator and breaker of the law of God. In the light of the above definition of good citizenship, the preacher cannot be a good citizen. In that event they must also be undesirable citizens. Let us see.

The law of God is supposed to be laid down in the ten commandments. The fourth commandment stipulates that in six days shalt thou labor and do all manner of work, and rest on the seventh and keep it holy. To work on the seventh is to desecrate it and render it unholy. Known facts and common experience show that the preacher rests during the entire six days and works, with his law, all through the seventh. If the mandate is to be regarded as authoritative that rest must be observed on the seventh day it is equally so in regard to the mandate that in six days all labor and all manner of work shall be done. The preacher does not labor in the six days, and he does no manner of work within them, all his work is done on the seventh and his professional duties require him to conform to a system that is the opposite of the commandment in every way.

In any event the churches and their organs are boasting that the "good work is succeeding and that nearly all the theatres have been closed, through their effort. The protest made was declared to be for the benefit of the poor actors and actresses whom the managers required to labor on Sunday. This is the most arrant hypocrisy. The preachers have no regard for the Sabbath save as a cold business proposition and it is a means of

saving grace and cash to them that the Sunday laws were originally enacted.

They prate of Sabbath desecration. How, and in what way? By being happy? By enjoying to the utmost a weekly respite from grinding toil amid green fields and fragrant flowers, in perfumed meadows and beside the streams? Is it not better to attend a theater on Sunday and see the portrayal of valuable lessons in human life than to meet at church in solemn conclave and scander our better? Is not dancing preferable to considering men and women to hell and damnation? Does a popcorn ball or a bag of peanuts if purchased and devoured on Sunday become displeasing to the Lord. The Blade realizes that the preachers would rather you go to church and give your nicks to them instead of the popcorn vendor, but we are asking about the Lord's pleasure, not the preacher's avarice. Then why should they be so persistent in showing their meddlesome snouts into the business affairs of other people that does not concern them.

Sunday should be so used to give us all a gentle reminder that we are men and women and not mere machines. If we want music we are entitled, under the national constitution, to have a whole brass band, if we so desire and have the necessary symphony about our clothes to pay the fiddlers. It is none of the preacher's business. They ought to take something for the meddler's itch.

### CHRIST A REVOLUTIONIST.

Was Christ a revolutionist?

Answer—He was.

Frequently the question is asked what would be done if Christ should come to this or that town, and the preachers all over the land have discoursed upon the subject from time to time. It is a foregone conclusion that the person would do a little quiet knocking from the pulpit. There has never been a sermon preached, to our knowledge or belief, on that subject that has been in the nature of a boost. It has been an aide de camp to a good sized knock in every hamlet and town. Did the pastor of this or that church get a call from the city officials, the text is used for a gentle roast of the "corrupt politicians" who have split the government, and a well prepared copy of the sermon is dashed out to the press for "publication" as an item of special interest. The preachers acquit the art of working the press for puff. Some of them will be willing to actually pay to have their "puffy's" printed in the local paper. Again, if a number of business men have failed to clip in when a "list" has been taken round by some dear sister of the faith, he is made a wicked man, and another sermon follows the pattern that they would give "Christ if he came to town."

The text is of an elastic nature and can be readily adapted for use at any old time and under any circumstances.

Now word comes from London that a member of the established clergy has broken out of the orthodox traces and in a sermon recently preached he terms Christ a revolutionist. Judging from the history given of him it would be no lie. When the money changers oppressed the people by their usurious exactions, Christ whipped them out of the temple. His followers do not take kindly to hat policy. They prefer to stand in and get a good rake off, which, not forthcoming in season or out of season, the text is dug up, resurrected as it were, and what would happen if Christ came is told in their special bible. If the person wants to get a cash in his pocket by pretending to raise money for a new church, or for extension of missions, and the business men of the community refuse to be caught, out comes the text in a different attire and the treatment they would give to Christ if he came among them is a splendid way in which to hurl defiance by threatening hell for denying their Savior. If the membership is split and small love manifested between them, if Christ should come is once brought into public view and they are told that by quarreling among themselves, they quarrel with the Lord.

It seems, however, that the text has been used to some advantage by the English parson, for he so impressed his hearers with the revolutionary character of the Christ he preached to them, that they believe him and forthwith proceeded to institute a "reform church" making a bold break from the church established. The more orthodox members of his congregation are said to have spoke right out in meeting and hailed him with cries of "no" to such an extent that he had to ask their permission to continue preaching to them even a little longer.

Take it which you will Christ was a revolutionist, if the accounts of him are true. He began by arguing with the doctors and he tackled the lawyers next. When people did not agree he cursed them and called them "whited sepulchres," and children of hell. When a fig tree failed to furnish him with fruit out of season he cursed it and caused it to wither and die. He jumped on the Pharisees and Scribes. He defied the lawful and virulent type. He upset the old Jewish religion and gave one that grew worse with its keeping. I did not improve with age. He revolutionized Judea and destroyed the Roman empire by deluging it with human blood. Is there a revolutionist that could do more, or do that much with so much effect. Could a revolutionist want to do more?

If the preachers would but continue in this strain the orthodox faith would soon be shattered and scattered. The more they turn in the direction of the London preacher the fewer Christians will be found in the land. Speed the good work and let us, as Freethinkers, turn in and give them a boost along the highway.



# WAS IT

## PEACE OR SWORD

That the Magazine came to bring upon Earth? Get a Few Pointers From The Despised Samaritans.

### EFFECT OF RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

(By A. A. Snow)

"The government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion," George Washington. "No religion shall be established by law, nor shall the equal rights of conscience be infringed." Constitution of the United States.

"Keep Church and State forever separate," U. S. Grant.

I see the above question is before your readers and to my mind the most intense believer ought to be willing to leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church and the private school. Mr. Andrews objects because he says, Mr. Long fails to confine himself to the statutes. I see but little ground for objection. If the statutes conflict with the constitution he is within his province. If, much more, they conflict with just principles, it behooves him to speak out. Would he unite in crying treason against those who objected to the use of the sword in the wars of religion to his indignity? Is not his position of taxing the people to support religion a vestige of these same dark ages; with only this difference; the penalty is a little milder?

Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the Jewish temple by erecting in it the statue of Jupiter. This enraged the Jews to a frenzy that knew no bounds and brought about one of the bloodiest wars of history. A mere handful of Jews drove Antiochus from the country. As long as history is read Antiochus will be known as the tyrant of his houses. We are reformed to build them and force them to endure there, and because you have the power are you determined to erect your image of Jupiter there, and determined to impress on the tender minds of our 'helpless' children, before their reason has sufficiently developed for self defense, your religion which we count superstition?

The assertion that it is absolutely true, that no man and woman without faith, is an assertion which is not a particle of proof. Antiochus made the same kind of assertions and with every bit as much reason. I notice the more ignorant a person is the more he insists that his religion is a panacea for all ills and so very positive he is about it that he will not allow for others the same right he claims for himself. If Infidelity or Atheism were taught in our schools we would not hear an emphatic protest from our most positive Christian, T. C. Andrews. Were he not protest were a Roman Catholic, as teacher of his children, to offer a prayer calling for the release of some of the rascals in purgatory and a king the Holy Mother of God, St. Michael, ten thousand and other saints to intervene in their behalf; or reading from his translation of the Bible where it squarely contradicts that of the Protestants?

How am I aware that there are thousands of noble Christians who can see the injustice of turning our school houses. At one time the Christians took all the children from the breasts of their heart-broken Jewish mothers and adopted them as their own. Some of the noblest Christians came to them who surpassed the Jews in morality, and all from that Atheistic soil that my friend says is so poor that it would not sprout white wheat. Their gods got their morality (what little they had) from the people get their morality from the heathen, the Golden Rule, (the most noble words he ever uttered) from the Atheist, Confucius? Now Christians will you not sit at the feet of the despised Samaritan, the Infidel, and learn and imitate Jesus? The Catholic and the Protestant are at an eternal wrangle, each wanting religion in the schools. Now each of you throw out religion and hark hark.

Oh Christian, will you never learn which it was that the Nazarene came to bring, was it peace or was it the sword?

EVEN BETTER THAN WE CAN.

Roscoe, Ohio.

James E. Hughes:—

I will drop you a few lines in order to send you a few clippings to use as you may see fit. I see in your last two issues that you are up to date, but am sorry to say it is not the case with me, and has not been for a year with a few exceptions. I am very fond of your paper and glad to read it even late. Your last of the 2nd, came to me on the 13th; don't take this as a complaint as I know you do the best you can.

JOHN McFARLAND.

## HIGH PRICED PREACHERS

Methodist Conference Breaks Up in a Row and Preacher Brings Suit For \$50,000.

HOW THESE CHRISTIANS LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

(By Emmett Weeks.)

Is there a preacher in the country whose reputation is worth the sum of \$5,000? If so, point him out. Have his picture taken and send it to the good, old Blade, for I am sure the editor would be willing to publish it on the front page.

If the Blade readers do not know of one I would like to call their attention to a preacher who thinks his reputation is worth that much for he has brought suit for slander to recover that amount. Fifty thousand dollars for an ordinary preacher? Whew!

Let me tell you about it. Some time ago at Malvern, Ark., the Little Rock Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which has been dividing members—from bishops to laymen—into factions for five years and which has been the source of numerous church trials, was brought to a climax with a \$50,000 suit for slander.

Alleging that the continued charges that he once had domestic troubles in a Texas town are false and injurious to his standing as a minister, Rev. James Thomas, the central figure in the long conference fight, has filed suit for damages in the civil courts against G. W. Hester, a DeWitt, Tex., banker, who came here to testify against Rev. Mr. Thomas before the church officials.

Hester, with wife, departed from Malvern before the papers could be served. ~~Mr. Thomas~~ This is only the beginning of a series of suits to thresh out the whole matter in civil courts and to bring church records before the public.

"Prosecutor" Reinstated.

Following the filing of the suit, Rev. J. S. Hawkins, who has been almost as prominent in the fight as Rev. Mr. Thomas on account of his having been assigned to prosecute the case for the church, was reinstated as a Little Rock pastor. Rev. Mr. Hawkins had been removed from the pulpit and "silenced" for making charges against Rev. Mr. Thomas publicly after the church trial.

The "Thomas case" had its beginning in the conference more than five years ago. Rev. Mr. Thomas at that time was professor of history and economics at Prescott College and was a member of the conference. He was appointed by Bishop Hoss to prosecute the case against Rev. Mr. Thomas under church indictment, for alleged "falsehood and duplicity."

At the next conference session Rev. Mr. Thomas was acquitted, after trial. A letter of character from Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald, Nashville, Tenn., giving material aid to the pastor under charges.

For his part in the prosecution of the case Rev. Mr. Hawkins declares that he was so harassed by friends of Rev. Mr. Thomas that he decided to make a public statement. In the general accusations it was charged that (Thomas) had been a prosecuting attorney in California while the records of that state showed that he had never held such office. This was evidence that Rev. Mr. Thomas had a "past." It was contended.

Wife Desertion Alleged.

Then came the allegation that G. W. Hester of DeWitt, Tex., had known Mr. Thomas was having domestic trouble in Texas.

Rev. Mr. Thomas, in refutation, stated he had never declared he was a prosecuting attorney in California, and he denied emphatically the entire charge with reference to the Texas trouble.

Meantime the feeling of factions grew and numerous charges and counter charges came before the conference. In one case the instigators of an indictment against a minister admitted that they had no proof and never expected to press the charges but made the move for "political effect."

Rev. Mr. Hawkins was summoned before the general conference that met appeal from a lower church tribunal.

in Birmingham Ala., May, 1906, on and two sentence of "silence for six months" because of his charges against Rev. Mr. Thomas was affirmed.

Banker Escapes Summons. When the last conference met in Malvern, the "Thomas case" had reached large proportions. Hester was summoned from Texas. His testimony was to aid Rev. Mr. Hawkins in his petition for reinstatement.

The slander suit for \$50,000, however, changed the aspect of the case, and when papers were filed to be served Hester could not be found by the Malvern deputies.

However, without a voice of protest, Rev. Hawkins, who has gone into the "Thomas case" deeper than any other man, for what he calls his own vindication, was restored to his former charge at Little Rock.

ANOTHER PREACHER MADE DEFENDANT.

In a Sensational Damage Suit Filed in a Southern Kentucky Law Court.

From Paducah comes the information that in a calm, clear manner, the Rev. F. M. Hawley, formerly Presbyterian minister at Fulton, told the jury in Federal court that he had been taken off the train at Fulton, by W. W. Meadows, Dick Thomas, H. T. White, James White and others, and beaten with a buggy whip and afterwards knocked unconscious by a blow on the back of his head, in an effort to force from him a confession of relations with Meadows' wife.

He said there were twenty-five gashes on his body caused by the whip. He was struck first by H. T. Smith and he said he denied the accusations and was going back to Fulton to put to rest the rumors when attacked. His counsel, Judge Robbins, of Mayfield, said the accusation was trumped up by Meadows, to be used in the defense of divorce proceedings instituted by Mrs. Meadows.

Will Childress and Wayne Thomas testified to the assault and Henry Oliver said he heard Hawley admit corresponding with Mrs. Meadows and counseling her to get a divorce so they could be married and go away as missionaries.

Charles H. Wheeler, for the defense, said he would show that Hawley and Mrs. Meadows were the talk of Fulton on account of their conduct. Hawley alleges conspiracy and sues for \$100,000 damages.

### WHY CHRISTIANITY FAILS.

A religion is never transformed; it exhausts the possibilities of life contained in the principle that created it, and then it dies, leaving the principle among the number of acquired truths. A given end is never reached by an instrument designed for another purpose. A faith that has for its end the salvation of the individual; for its means, the belief in a mediator between God and individual; for its condition, Grace; for dogma, the fall and redemption through another's works—such a faith can never be found a Society which, though it works for the same end and has for means the belief in the collective life of Humanity; for its condition, the works that we have done on the earth, for its doctrine, Progress.—Mazini.

### WANTS TO KNOW.

James E. Hughes:— Dear sir, Inclosed find P. O. for my subscription for twelve months. I do not know how the rest are paying you. I hope very well you have solicited and sent, to you about two clubs. I hope they are still with you and paying all right. I read my paper and pass them along. I certainly have done some good here for freethought though there is plenty of ignorance here yet and among the educated people at that. I have been a freethinker for 25 years. I am now 45 years of age and weight 255 pounds. I have never been bested by a preacher yet and I have run a many one. I am now as much a student as ever. I get three or four liberal papers all the time and have many works of philosophy at my command. Always count on me as a well wisher for your little paper. I am better pleased with it than ever and hope that the "Blue Grass Blade" and the cause it represents may continue to grow until superstition and ignorance shall fade away and be replaced by the few people that shall follow in the future.

W. R. RAY.

Brother Hughes:— Please send copies of paper containing this letter. Part I, also Part II, and if you have got them, at least half a dozen of each and I will settle with you for them.

I wrote you recently, but as you have counted on me as a well wisher, I hope you will have a little more breathing time.

Revelations is the hardest dose to get anything out of that I ever tried. Hope Part III, will be worth.

E. LEWIS.



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